

**Three Programs of Collaborative Piano Recitals: Schubert's *Winterreise*,
The Palette of France, and a Lecture-Recital on the Phonetics of Singing in
Mandarin Chinese, with Some Associated Repertoire**

by

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of the requirements for the degree of
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT	iv
RECITAL 1	1
Recital 1 Program	1
Recital 1 Program Notes	2
RECITAL 2	6
Recital 2 Program	6
Recital 2 Program Notes	8
RECITAL 3	13
Recital 3 Program	13

ABSTRACT

Three dissertation recitals were performed in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts (Music: Performance) in the University of Michigan. These recitals showcase the distinct and substantial roles of the collaborative pianist.

The first recital took place April 3, 2019 at University of Michigan's Stamps Auditorium. It is a recital of Schubert's song cycle, *Winterreise*, featuring baritone, Samuel Kidd.

The second recital showcased stylistic variety in the music of France, with the recital titled "The Palette of France." It took place February 22, 2020 at University of Michigan's Stamps Auditorium. The recital featured soprano, Colleen Beucher, mezzo-soprano, Sedona Libero, baritone, Matthew J. Daniels, and violinist, Hee Yeon Kim. The program consisted of three songs by Henri Duparc, the song cycle *Le vieux coffret* by André Caplet, selections from *Chants de France* by Joseph Canteloube, and Sonata for Piano and Violin by César Franck.

The third recital was a lecture recital which took place March 14, 2020 at University of Michigan's Watkins Lecture Hall. The lecture focused on the phonetics of the language of Mandarin Chinese in the context of singing, and the performance consisted of art songs and folk songs from mainland China and Malaysia written in

Mandarin Chinese. The recital featured soprano, Colleen Beucher, mezzo-soprano, Christine Amon, tenor, Nicholas Music, and baritone, Louis Ong.

RECITAL 1 PROGRAM

Samuel Kidd, Baritone
Bernard Tan, Piano

Wednesday, April 3, 2019
Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium
8:00 pm

Winterreise, D. 911 (1827)

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Gute Nacht
Die Wetterfahne
Gefrorne Tränen
Erstarrung
Der Lindenbaum
Wasserflut
Auf dem Flusse
Rückblick
Irrlicht
Rast
Frühlingstraum
Einsamkeit
Die Post
Der greise Kopf
Die Krähe
Letzte Hoffnung
Im Dorfe
Die stürmische Morgen
Täuschung
Der Wegweiser
Das Wirtshaus
Mut
Die Nebensonnen
Der Leiermann

RECITAL 1 PROGRAM NOTES

“We were altogether dumbfounded by the mournful, gloomy tone of these songs...” These were the words of Joseph von Spaun, who attended the performance of *Winterreise* played and sung by the composer, Franz Schubert. Indeed, these songs were dark and emotionally disturbing during its composition in 1827, just a year before the composer died after a long battle with syphilis. Despite the reactions to the 24-song cycle, Schubert was positive about these songs: “I like these more than all the rest, and you will too one day.”

It is interesting to note that by the composition of *Winterreise*, Schubert has composed about 600 songs, in various poetic subjects and musical structures. Schubert has had countless composition tools at his disposal in lieder writing. He has painted the subject of death in *Der Tod und das Mädchen*, depicted the sound of the water in *Auf dem Wasser zu singen* and imitated the sound of the spinning wheel in one of his earliest and most celebrated songs *Gretchen am Spinnrade*. In *Winterreise*, the composer does more than word painting – he creates the psyche of the protagonist through the composition.

The song cycle begins with *Gute Nacht*, the beginning of a journey of heartbreak, hallucination, nostalgia, and eventually, death. The protagonist says “I came as a stranger and now leave as a stranger,” which implies that something has happened before we hear the first chord of this cycle. We do not know what happened before this, but we know from the constant iterations of the chords in the music that the protagonist

has made up his mind to leave the place, with resolve and courage, despite the snow, despite the cold.

This journey is a lonely one for the protagonist, for the only living things he meets throughout the 80 minutes of performance are the howling dogs and the crow. They however never speak to him. The only time we hear a voice talking to him is from the linden tree, as early as in the fifth song, which suggests that he is hallucinating. He hears the voice of the linden tree calling him to find peace in it. This delusive psychological state of the protagonist is later amplified in *Irrlichts* when he thinks everything that happens to him is the act of the will-o-the-wisp. In *Täuschung*, he sees the light dances to him and calling him, and he chooses to go to it.

Despite the gloominess and “sombre mood” noted by Schaun, we do have a few episodes of “happiness” (if one can use this word) in the cycle. One of it is the popular song *Der Lindenbaum*, where the falling leaves motif is continued in the major mode from the numbing motif in the previous song *Erstarrung*. It gives a temporary relieve to the mood of the protagonist as he walks past this linden tree, which is probably the only green object he sees throughout this whole journey.

After first realizing that he is tired in *Rast*, he stops for a rest and dreams of the past where both love and nature were still beautiful. This nostalgia he feels in the other song in major mode is *Frühlingstraum* where the music-box-like piano introduction takes him back to the spring. This dream is of course interjected and he is then reminded that he has lost his love, as the heartbreaking last line of the poem writes: When can the leaves turn green? When can I hold my love in my arms?

The “mournful, gloomy tone” of *Winterreise* has often been associated with Schubert’s illness towards the end of his life, when he contracted syphilis. Schubert once wrote to a friend: “I find myself to be the most unhappy and wretched creature in the world. Imagine a man whose health will never be right again...to whom the felicity of love and friendship have nothing to offer but pain at best...” It is not difficult to see how a cycle of such solemn nature can be born out of this mental state of the composer.

The solemnity of this song cycle reaches its peak with the chilling song *Der Leiermann*, the last song of the cycle. Schubert creates the hurdy-gurdy sound in the first two measures with a grace note which distorts the perfect fifth drone (which remained throughout the entire song), depicting the out-of-tune nature of the instrument. As mentioned earlier, the only two living beings the protagonist meets in the cycle are the howling dog and the crow, and one would perhaps say that the hurdy-gurdy man in this final song is another living thing mentioned in this cycle. However, the text can be read as him seeing the mirror image of himself as he completes his journey towards death, when he interacts to the hurdy-gurdy man at the very end of the cycle: “Shall I go with you? Will you grind your music to the songs I sing?”

Performing *Winterreise* is in itself an incredible journey for both the singer and the pianist. The famous interpreter of German lieder and mezzo-soprano Elena Gerhardt once said that “you have to be haunted by this cycle to be able to sing it”, and the pianist and composer Benjamin Britten mentioned that “[Schubert] gets the most extraordinary moods and atmospheres with so few notes.” Indeed, the relative simplicity of the music on the page translates to more attention to details and a closer marriage between the poem and the music while creating the most extraordinary atmospheres

throughout the song cycle. One cannot help but to be astounded by Schubert's unmatched genius when listening to this masterpiece and we are certainly grateful to be able to perform our interpretation of *Winterreise* this evening.

RECITAL 2 PROGRAM

Bernard Tan, Piano

Colleen Beucher, Soprano
Sedona Libero, Mezzo-soprano
Matthew J. Daniels, Baritone
Hee Yeon Kim, Violin

*Saturday, February 22, 2020
Walgreen Drama Center, Stamps Auditorium
8:00 pm*

Chanson triste (1868)
Élégie (1874)
La vie antérieure (1884)

Henri Duparc
(1848-1933)

Colleen Beucher, soprano

Le vieux coffret (1918)
Songe
Berceuse
In una selva oscura
Forêt

André Caplet
(1878-1925)

Matthew J. Daniels, baritone

From **Chants de France** (1948)
Auprès de ma blonde
Où irai-je me plaindre?
Au pré de la Rose
D'où venez-vous, fillette?

Joseph Canteloube
(1879-1957)

Sedona Libero, mezzo-soprano

Intermission

Sonata in A Major for Piano and Violin (1886)

Allegretto ben moderato

Allegro

Recitativo—Fantasia: Ben moderato

Allegretto poco mosso

César Franck
(1822-1890)

Hee Yeon Kim, violin

RECITAL 2 PROGRAM NOTES

The Palette of France

"The Palette of France" features music composed by Henri Duparc, André Caplet, Joseph Canteloube and César Franck. This collaborative piano recital highlights some of the diverse styles of music from France, from folk song arrangements to the *mélodies* to the instrumental sonata. This recital aims to inspire its listeners with the diverse colors and the beautiful variety of the music of France.

This recital opens with three songs by the composer **Henri Duparc** (1848-1933). His composition style is heavily influenced by the Wagnerian style of music, along with his other contemporaries such as Emmanuel Chabrier, with whom he visited Bayreuth. The song compositions of Duparc are considered precious gems by many, for only 17 songs survived, due to his short career as a composer and his perfectionism. Duparc was known to have destroyed many of his compositions when he was unsatisfied with them. In fact, of the 17 songs that exist today, three of them were not intended by the composer to be published as he saw them as undeserving. They are in the same set as ***Chanson triste***, the first song performed in this recital and the only song Duparc published from the set. This set of songs contains the earliest known songs composed by Duparc. *Chanson triste* is written with only broken-chords accompaniment throughout, a device we do not see in his later compositions. Duparc's later songs were written mostly in binary forms, for example the next song in the program, ***Élégie***. This is the only song by Duparc where the French text is the translation of a poem originally in another language. This prose translation is based on the work of the Irish poet Thomas

Moore, the poem "Oh! Breathe Not His Name" on the death of the Irish patriot Robert Emmet. While this song is written in binary form, the last song of this group ***La vie antérieure*** is interestingly in a form of A-B-C. This is the last known song of Henri Duparc, composed in 1884, with texts by Charles Baudelaire. The text describes the protagonist who is stranded in a secluded place, perhaps exotic, where naked slaves serve him while the protagonist keeps his secret of his previous life from them. The postlude of this song depicts the mystery of the protagonist's secret while at the same time paints his sorrow of being an enigma.

The next composer featured in this recital is **André Caplet** (1878-1925), a close friend of the impressionistic composer Claude Debussy. Caplet is known more for his collaboration with Debussy as he was responsible for many of the orchestrations of Debussy's works including the orchestration of the most well-known *Clair de lune* from Debussy's *Suite bergamasque*. Caplet's own compositions consist of great complexity and beauty. Apart from his *Deux Divertissements* for solo harp, Caplet has not written a piece of music that is performed by only one musician.

The set of four songs that is performed in this recital, ***Le vieux coffret*** (The Old Box), is based on texts by the French poet Rémy de Gourmont. Towards the end of his life, De Gourmont developed severe skin lesions which left him disfigured which in turn made the poet avoid any social life. These poems were written at the end of De Gourmont's life, and were published only three years before his death. This collection is perhaps the summation of the life he wished he had: a lover, a life without worries, or simply a hand to hold. Caplet set four of these poems into music during the same period when he was gassed in the First World War and subsequently diagnosed with pleurisy,

the inflammation of the membranes that surround the lungs and line the chest cavity. This inflammation eventually kills Caplet less than 10 years later. In the first song, **Songe** (dream), the protagonist dreams up a perfect life, but sighs that a perfect life can only happen in a dream. In **Berceuse** (lullaby), the protagonist beckons to an imaginary lover and in the end invites this lover to drink a new soul from his lips. **In una selva oscura** (in a dark forest) is a song expressing the hopes of being isolated or secluded and being in oblivion. The last song of the set, **Forêt** (forest), is a ode to the forest, an ever-neutral observer of life and love.

From the intricacy of Caplet, we come to the rustic folksong settings of **Joseph Canteloube** (1879-1957). Canteloube was born in Malaret in the Auvergne region, where he set many of their folksongs into five volumes of *Chants d'Auvergne*. He believed that the genre of folksong is the purest form of art in expression, and believes that the music of the settings of folksongs he composed are sounds of nature, as evident by his writing in the French newspaper *L'Action Française*:

"The songs of the earth need their backdrop, their setting, their accompaniment of nature and fresh air. Only the immaterial art of music, with its moving, impalpable harmonies, timbres and rhythms, can evoke this atmosphere. I would go so far as to say that it has the right to do so, for many peasant songs can be qualified as the purest form of art, in terms of their sentiments and expression, if not their form."

The selection of four songs from the first album of **Chants de France** expresses various moods of the "peasant songs". **Auprès de ma blonde** sings about the nature, the lover, and the country, contrasted by the sorrowful **Où irai-je me plaindre** lamenting the loss

of the lover. ***Au près de la rose*** is a trivial song about the life of birds, and ***D'où venez-vous fillette*** is a witty song about an exchange between a man and the little girl with a basket of oranges.

"The Palette of France" comes around from Henri Duparc to his teacher in Paris Conservatoire, **César Franck** (1822-1890). Franck was born in Belgium, but moved to Paris at a young age. His compositions included many genres such as the symphonic poem *Les Éolides*, his opera *Hulda*, Piano Quintet in F minor, *Grande Pièce Symphonique* for organ, piano works and art songs. However, many of his works are rarely performed, unlike his violin sonata, originally titled ***Sonata for Piano and Violin in A major***, which is now one of the most frequently performed pieces of the violin-piano repertoire. It is a work written towards the end of Franck's life in 1886, when the composer turned to chamber music after years of composing large-scaled works. This work remains the only instrumental-piano sonata Franck has ever written. This violin sonata was dedicated to the Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe who marries at the end of that year. The story was told that Ysaÿe was asked by Franck to perform it immediately upon receiving the manuscript on his wedding day. The pianist who played with him that day, Marie-Léontine Bordes-Pène, fortunately had been shown this piece in advance by Franck so that she did not have to sight-read this sonata with Ysaÿe.

The first movement, ***Allegretto ben moderato***, opens with a rocking theme which has a sense of yearning. The piano has a brief swell of emotion in the middle of the movement, but the movement stays in the similar mood before the passionate outburst of the ***Allegro***. In this movement both the piano and violin take a more virtuosic role, playing the ardent theme which often uses the intervals used in the first movement.

The third movement, ***Ben moderato: Recitativo - Fantasia***, is a free improvisatory movement as its title suggests. It recalls the theme of the first movement and introduces another theme towards the end which will become another passionate outburst in the last movement, ***Allegretto poco mosso***. The main melody of the last movement, which is marked dolce cantabile (sweetly with a singing quality), is heard throughout the movement as a canon at the unison at the distance of a measure by the other instrument. After the passionate outburst of the theme heard towards the end of the previous movement, the main melody returns before erupting to a climatic coda to conclude this masterpiece.

RECITAL 3 PROGRAM

Bernard Tan, Piano

Colleen Beucher, Soprano; Christine Amon, Mezzo-soprano
Nicholas Music, Tenor; Louis Ong, Baritone

Saturday, March 14, 2020
Moore Building, Watkins Lecture Hall
2:00 pm

Pinyin to Singing:
The Language of Mandarin Chinese, its Phonetics in Singing, and its Music

教我如何不想他 [How Should I not Miss Him]	Zhao Yuen Ren (1892-1982)
玫瑰三愿 [Three Wishes of Rose]	Huang Zi (1904-1938)
乌苏里船歌 [Ussuri Boat Song]	Nanai Folk Song
摇篮曲 [Lullaby]	Manchu Folk Song
彤云天边飞 [Clouds Over the Red Sky]	Ooi Chin Boon (b. 1937)
飞 [Fly]	Khaw Guan Liang (1935-2002)
我曾经爱过你 [I Have Loved You]	Khaw Guan Liang
帕米尔我的家乡 [Pamir, My Beautiful Homeland]	Zheng Qiu Feng (b. 1931)
大江东去 [Eastbound River]	Qing Zhu (1893-1959)